



RECORDS MANAGEMENT ADVICE

Basics of Records Management: **Preserving Maine's History**

Purpose: Provide guidance to state government agencies regarding the importance of preserving the archival records of the State of Maine.

The purpose of the Maine State Archives is to make the operations of state and local government more efficient, more effective and more economical through records management. The Archives does this by preserving the permanent historical records of Maine and providing access to the public.

Maine's records are among the most important historical and cultural resources belonging to the people of Maine. These records have permanent value for study and research, allowing the public to benefit from knowledge of state affairs.

These unique, irreplaceable records are essential to ensuring the rights of citizens and organizations as well as understanding the responsibilities and limitations of a transparent government. Included among them are the papers of each governor, legislative records, court records, records from state agencies, and all of the "official records" of Maine, including governors' proclamations, executive orders, election results, and laws as passed and signed.

The Archives employs professionally trained staff dedicated to helping researchers find and understand state government records, while continuing to educate state employees of their responsibilities related to state records retention. This guarantees the best possible service to the public.

Each state agency is an important part of Maine and its history. It is essential that the archival records of state agencies be preserved. The archival program is dependent on individuals, therefore your understanding, cooperation and support in preserving our historical records is essential. **Without your help**, the job will not be done and many of the historical records will be lost or inadvertently destroyed. One important way to ensure records are protected is for agencies to have up-to-date [records retention schedules](#) and to make sure all employees are aware of which records they need to retain.

We hope you will view preservation of the state's archival records not just as a legal requirement, but as an important cultural responsibility in which you can actively participate.

Additional advice regarding the management of public records is available at
<http://www.maine.gov/sos/arc/records/state/statetraining.html>

"The right record, to the right person, at the right time, at the lowest possible cost"